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“I was wondering where the ducks went when the lagoon got all icy and frozen over. I wondered if some guy came in a truck and took them away to a zoo or something. Or if they just flew away” (22). The image of the ducks which Holden thinks about which Holden thinks before and during the roaming reflects his feelings and sentiments. As we confirmed in Chapter 1, the image of the ducks signifies his loneliness toward dropout and home, and his desire to escape. In Chapter 2, we considered the image of the ducks, connecting it with his reality. When the image represents Holden’s dependent situation, the ducks of image are “domestic ducks”, and when it represents his wish to be independent, the ducks are “wild ducks.” Holden only thinks about escaping rough situation; however the cab driver Horwitz poses another image, fishes in the lagoon, which stand for the rough situation. Holden thinks the ducks should leave when the lagoon got frozen over, but the real lagoon is partly frozen and partly not frozen, which indicates some room for him in the reality.

But as we confirmed in chapter 3, even after the image of the ducks, Holden feels lonesome and his desire to escape is not solved in a favorable way. Through the image of the ducks, we can read Holden’s tough situation even after the story.

Through the image of the ducks, we can know Holden’s various aspects. The image of the ducks can be said as the one of the most important signification of *The Catcher in the Rye*.

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habitation and stable lives. Even to mention their independence, the sea lions are fed and seem to lack self-direction. (Furthermore, they are fed with fishes, which are used as a symbol of the people like Horwitz managing to survive their difficult situations.) The sea lions can be said to be the opposing figure of his (wild) duck image. Additionally, Holden stops at them because of Phoebe (actually he once passes by but turns back to her), and it seems to have some symbolic meaning. That is, after he goes home with Phoebe, Holden would be accepted as the swimming sea lions in the pool, and would live a life without independence.

But the indication from the sea lion episode is just pretense. His reality goes in a different direction.

After Holden finishes all the story of his roaming, in the last chapter of *Catcher*, Holden's current situation becomes clearly revealed. He implies now he is in a countryside with some people including a psychoanalyst, which means that his desire to escape to a country comes true in an ironic way. And there Holden misses everybody even Ackley, Stradlater, and Maurice.

Tanaka Keisuke regards the end of the story as a predictor of Holden's bright future. He says "I feel a sense of salvations from Holden's intriguing peace at the end of the story" (Tanaka, 270, my translation). However, Holden's status in a country with a psychoanalyst cannot be seen as peaceful; it is rather disquieting. Also, the three guys Holden gives as example of people he misses are not an attractive memory to him; they are the very guys who emphasize Holden's weakness. It just implies how much he feels lonesome to recall such guys.

Holden's image of ducks represents his loneliness and the desire to escape. Even after the image of the ducks evanishes, however, the problem connected to his loneliness and desire to escape does not completely vanish and cannot be solved. Through the image of the ducks, we can read Holden's tough situation even after the story.

## Conclusion

Central Station in the rush hour. After the rest, he walks over to Fifth Avenue and gets depressed at the atmosphere of the Christmas Season. Then he determines never to come back home and to New York again. (Probably because he has already gone to see the real lagoon on the former day, he does not think about the ducks.) Before he departs on the same day, he goes to the elementary school where Phoebe goes, and asks of an old lady to pass to Phoebe a note, which says “Meet me at the Museum of art near the door at quarter past 12 if you can ...”(306). And then the story comes to a climax with the meeting with Phoebe.

Holden waits for Phoebe to say goodbye: However, when she arrives, he sees her with her suitcases. Holden gets irritated to her saying that she will go with him, and finally he tells her that he has changed his mind and given up his departure. Because of Holden’s expression of anger, Phoebe becomes grouchy so that Holden takes her to the zoo in Central Park to calm her. And they stop at the sea lions.

There weren’t too many people in the zoo because it was sort of a lousy day, but there were a few around the sea lions’ swimming pool and all. I started to go by it, old Phoebe stopped and made out she was watching the sea lions getting fed—a guy was throwing fish at them—so I went back.(319)

In the roaming, Holden thinks about the ducks in Central Park many times, but when he walks around the park with Phoebe, he does not go to the lagoon. Instead, they stop at the sea lions.

The sea lions seem to relate to the image of the ducks. First, the place where the sea lions are is a zoo to which Holden supposes the ducks on the frozen lagoon should be carried with a truck. Additionally, even though there are many animals in the zoo, the siblings stop at the sea lions, which, similarly to ducks, are waterside animals. There seems to be a relation between the ducks and the sea lions. In contrast to the ducks on the frozen lagoon, the sea lions swim in the pool, which shows their comfortable

said to be a perfect homecoming. He conceals his identity to the elevator boy of his apartment and goes into his house as if he were trespassing. The description of the moment of his arrival in his house is symbolically depicted. About the moment, he says:

Our foyer has a funny smell that doesn't smell like anyplace else. I don't know what the hell it is. It isn't cauliflower and it isn't perfume—I don't know what the hell it is—but you always know you're home. I started to take off my coat and hang it up in the foyer closet, but that closet's full of hangers that rattle like madmen when you open the door, so I left it on. (242-243)

From the smell of the foyer, Holden senses that he is home. Because of the similar smell of cauliflower (which resembles the spelling of his family name Caulfield), he must feel relieved. When he begins to stay in the house and tries to hang his coat, however, the foyer closet is so full that he should keep his coat on even when he is at home. The full closet indicates his lack of room in his house, and also forces him to keep his outdoor clothes on.

Let us analyze Holden's failed homecoming by comparing it to the real and the partly frozen and partly not frozen lagoon. In Holden's eyes, Phoebe must play the role of embodying the not frozen part of the lagoon. During the roaming, he remembers her many times and expects a good communications, saying: "I mean if you tell old Phoebe something, she knows exactly what the hell you're talking about" (103). It shows his expectation toward her to alleviate his loneliness. Phoebe is supposed to be the not frozen part of the lagoon which accepts Holden. On the other hand, his parents assume the role of the frozen part, which motivates the removal of the ducks. Holden leaves home because of his parents' arrival, so that they are supposed to play a similar role to the frozen part of the lagoon.

After leaving home, Holden visits and plans to stay at Mr. and Mrs. Antolini's house, but he gets so surprised at a kind of homosexual action of Mr. Antolini that he runs away. He has a sleep on the bench in Grand

Holden loses the excuse, but he finds another hope in the reality of the partly frozen and partly not frozen lagoon.

As we have confirmed, Holden's image of ducks expresses his loneliness, and the image of frozen lagoon is the cause of the ducks' removal. He thinks "where the ducks went when the lagoon got all icy and frozen over" (22). Comparing to "Crazy", in *Catcher*, the lagoon's condition of being frozen is more emphasized by using the word "all icy". However, the real lagoon is actually "partly frozen, and partly not frozen" (237). Because of the real condition of the lagoon, Holden must believe in the attendance of the ducks and tries to look for them. He might have considered the duck's absence if the whole part of lagoon got all frozen over, but actually the real lagoon is partly frozen, partly not frozen, so that there is some possibility of the ducks' presence. And the partly frozen and partly not frozen lagoon indicates his place in the real world.

That is why he throws all of his coins of the remaining amount into the not frozen part of the lagoon (239). Holden says that he cannot understand why he did it (240), but, the money is actually for his leaving and separation from his home. Noma says, "Holden's relinquishment of the money is same as to force himself into going home" (Noma, 190, my translation). And finally, on the midnight of the second day, he goes in home despite his will not to go home till Wednesday. And in the rest of the roam, he never thinks about the ducks again.

The image of the ducks represents Holden's loneliness and his desire to escape, and ends up in relating to his decision to go home.

### **Chapter 3: Life after Image of the ducks**

Holden's image of the ducks does not appear after the night of the second day, but the story itself keeps on. Lastly, we will take a look at some other incidents related to the image of the ducks.

In the night of the second day of his roaming, Holden goes home, going back on his decision not to go home till Wednesday, but it cannot be

something near the edge of the water, near the grass and all. That's how I nearly fell in [to the lagoon]. But I couldn't find any. (237)

After he gets wet and cannot find any of the ducks, he shivers from the cold and starts to think about his death from pneumonia and his own funeral, and then he moves to thinking about the memory of his dead brother Allie, Allie's funeral in the past, and the time when Holden and his family visited Allie's grave. Out of his remaining amount of four dollars and 3 cents, Holden throws the whole of three quarters and the nickel to the not-frozen part of the lagoon. Then he decided to go home to see Phoebe.

Tanaka Keishi puts explanatory notes on these series of Holden's action. Following paragraph is the summary of Tanaka's essay.

The record "Little Shirley Beans" is singed by an innocent girl, and Phoebe, who takes the record, is also innocent. The broken record implies changing of the innocent relationship of the two siblings. The change means, as the absence of the ducks indicates, a separation by death. Holden starts getting worried about his own death and then recalls Allie and his death. Holden remembers the time when the family went and visited Allie's grave, but he regards it as the living's self-satisfying action and no use for the dead. He is strongly conscious that the survived never meet dead people, and if he were dead, he would never meet Phoebe. These thoughts drive Holden to go home (Tanaka, 192-198).

Tanaka well explains Holden's series of action, but I dare to declare that we cannot think it so simple. When Holden drops and breaks in pieces the record of "Little Shirley Beans", the present to Phoebe, it means that he loses an excuse to go home. In the plot of *Catcher*, Phoebe is a key person who plays an important role to connect Holden and home. Many times he wants and tries to call to his home on the pretense of speaking with Phoebe. And it was Phoebe who (involuntarily) dissuades Holden to depart away from his home and New York, by an insistent attitude trying to go with him. The breaking into pieces of the present to her is as same as losing his excuse of homecoming.

to fly far away like a duck.” (『「ライ麦畑」をつかまえて』, 60). He visualizes his escape from his reality like a domestic duck taken away by a truck, and the best of all like a wild duck flying away by itself, does not want to be a fish which just endures.

## 2.2. Partly-Frozen and Partly-Not-Frozen Lagoon

In this paper, we have confirmed the representation of Holden's image of the ducks and a limitation of his thoughts on it. And how is the image of the ducks involved with Holden at its end?

The last scene of the image of the ducks is at the midnight of the second day. After the quarrel with Sally, Holden calls his three-year-old friend, Carl Luce up to a pub, but Luce ignores him saying “I'm lonesome as hell” (227) and soon goes away and leaves him alone. Holden keeps drinking and talks to a man, but chillily he tells Holden to go home. Finally Holden gets so heavily drunk that he starts to cry at the radiator because of loneliness. The check woman, who is as old as his mother, treats him so nicely and says to him “go home and go to bed” kindly (234). But he is unable to go home then. Holden goes out of the pub to freezing weather, and then he walks over to Central Park to see “what the hell the ducks were doing”(235), because he is not “far over to the park, and I didn't have anyplace else special to go to”(235).

Holden recalls the ducks in Central Park because of his loneliness and his inability to go home; even though people recommend him to go home, it would not change his situation, but just emphasizes his inability to go home.

On his arriving at the park, Holden drops the record “Little Shirley Beans” which he is planning to give to Phoebe, and it breaks into pieces. Holden is so shocked that he almost cries, and he picks up the pieces into his coat. Then he goes to the lagoon to see the ducks. Despite of his image, the lagoon is partly-frozen and partly not frozen, but there is none of them around;

I thought maybe if there were any around, they might be asleep or



wild duck. One reflects his current condition, and the other shows his ideal self- image.

However, Salinger poses another image which represents the severe and stoical reality and a limitation of Holden's thoughts. On the second cab, Holden asks the driver named Horwitz about the ducks in Central Park, but despite of Holden's intention, Horwirz' answer is about the fish;

[Horwitz] "The fish don't go no place. They stay right where they are, the fish. Right in the goddam lake."

[Holden] "The fish—— that's different. The fish is different. I'm talking about the *ducks*," I said.

"What's different about it? Nothing's different about it," Horwitz said. Everything he said, he sounded sore about something. "It's tougher for the *fish*, the winter and all, than it is for the ducks, for Chrissake. Use your head, for Chrissake."(127)

When Holden thinks about the time when the lagoon in Central Park is frozen over, Holden considers the ducks and where and how they go away. But in contrast, Horwitz focuses himself on the fishes which live in the lagoon and cannot leave out from the lagoon. As Horwitz says, it will be harder for the fishes when the lagoon has been frozen over. Horwitz explains "If you was a fish, Mother Nature'd take care of *you*, wouldn't she?"(129). Even though Horwitz is in a tough situation, he believes he would overcome it with a help by the vital natural force. But Holden cannot think about the fishes right in the way Horwitz does. As mentioned above, Holden desires to escape from his situation, so that naturally he will not try to stay, accept and solve the circumstance. And he would not like to continue the fish topic on. Holden's attitude to the fish topic is the appearance of his fear to turn and face the reality. The fish image is a demonstration of Holden's weakness to face his situation and reality.

Holden's feeling to the relationship between the ducks and the fishes is as Salinger Association pointed out; "Holden hopes his own potential

seem “wild ducks”, which are a type of migratory birds. When the lagoon in Central Park gets frozen over, domestic ducks need a help of humans, but the migratory ducks just fly away.

In Japanese translations of *Catcher*, they translate the word, duck, as “domestic duck.” In this case, translators such as Nozaki and Murakami seem to think that Holden’s image of ducks will fit the ducks taken by a truck. These translators might consider Holden will also need a help when he leaves for somewhere. Noma also touches wild-or-domestic ducks problem in his essay, and concludes Holden’s image of ducks signifies domestic ducks, in the result of which he skips to another argument.

Indeed, there are many factors to consider Holden as a domestic duck. Holden is a native New Yorker who needs to be supported by his parents and the people around him; his parents will get a letter about his dropout, because they pay the money for his school, and the money he uses during the roam is a present from his rich grandmother. As we confirmed in the previous chapter, Holden hates cars, but actually he uses cabs many times during the roam. It resembles the ducks taken by a truck. If he understands all these situations, spontaneously the ducks of his image will be domestic ducks; Holden is in protection by people around him and needs a help to move away.

But Holden hopes to be independent, which is clearly imprinted in his desire to escape to the Westside of America. He tells each of Sally and Phoebe that he will get a job and will make enough money to live on in the countryside. (Only, both Sally and Phoebe insist that he cannot carry it on.) At least, Holden has a will to stand on his own feet. On the noon of the last day, he passes by the zoo of Central Park (that means he is near his home), and then gets determined; “Finally, what I decided I’d go away. I decided I’d never go home again and I’d never go away to another school again” (303). His determination never to go back both to home and schools shows his will of physical and spiritual independence. In this case, the ducks of his image are commensurate with wild ducks.

The image of the ducks cannot be chosen as either domestic duck or

dropped out. He hates his school, but can't give even one particular reason to hate it. He hates his father, but he feels comfortable to take a direct route back home and to kiss his mother. (In *Catcher*, many of times Holden wants to call to his home, but stops because of fear of his mother answering). He tells he hates New York, but there is only one example actually happened to him (encountering of George Harrison). He has a desire to escape, but it seems that he is not at stake and has little reason and propriety to leave.

However, Holden in *Catcher* is under threat. As in "I'm Crazy", he just has been dropped out from his school, but also is supposed to stay at the dormitory which he considers full of phonies. He attempts to escape from Pencey, but he cannot go home and he even needs to avoid his parents. He plans to stay in New York for the rest, but many incidents wear out his nerves. So due to these experiences, he desires to escape. In *Catcher*, Holden has proper reason of having his desire.

In *Catcher*, the image of the ducks is used to show Holden's loneliness and desire to escape. But the author's intention of depicting of the ducks is more than that. Holden and the ducks are portrayed as very alike. In the following chapters, we will consider how the similarity works on his life.

## **Chapter 2: Ducks and Reality**

### 2.1. Domestic Ducks and Wild Ducks, Duck and Fish

Holden attaches a question to the image of the ducks, whether the ducks will be taken by a truck or just fly away. Then, how does he capture the features of the ducks?

The word "duck" represents two types of birds; wild ducks and domestic ducks. According to *The World Animal Encyclopedia*, a wild duck is one of migratory birds, domestic ducks are originally wild ducks which are domesticated and raised by and for human beings. (*The World Animal Encyclopedia*, 77). Holden's image of the ducks which is "taken by someone with a truck or something to a zoo" is likely to mean "domestic ducks". Besides, the other ones which fly away to south by themselves

I was wondering where the ducks went when the lagoon got all icy and frozen over, I wondered if some guy came in a truck and took them away to a zoo or something. Or if they just flew away. (22)

The question is about where and how the ducks go away from the frozen lagoon. This question is not written in “Crazy,” even though the story emphasizes Holden’s outsider status; he is the only one who is out of the gym and is dropped out from the school. In the story, the question, “where the ducks went” shows his anxiety about his future after the dropout. But he never needs to think about going out of the school by his own self. Meanwhile, in *Catcher* it matters a good deal to Holden how the ducks leave the frozen lagoon. In *Catcher*, the image of the ducks is supposed to represent his loneliness, and it adds the problem to escape from the frozen lagoon. His desire to escape is derived from “Slight Rebellion off Madison.”

“Slight Rebellion off Madison” focuses on the 17-year-old Holden’s date with his girlfriend Sally Haze and their breakup. This plot is, as Salinger Association explains, the prototype of *Catcher*’s chapter 17 and 18. Just like in *Catcher*, Holden shows Sally his hate toward boys’ schools and New York. Then suddenly he asks her to go to the west-side of America. Sally regards his offer as unrealistic and crazy, and disagrees to it. Then they are break up.

Holden in “Slight” is in a different situation in “Crazy”. As noted before, in “Crazy,” Holden is kicked out and associates the dropout and anxiety about his future with the ducks in Central Park. On the other hand, in “Slight,” despite of the fact that he is in school of New York, Holden hates his school and city life, and desires to leave. *Catcher* is the result of combining the two stories. Although there is no image of the ducks in “Slight,” the desire to escape overlapped on the image of the ducks of *Catcher* is surely attributed to “Slight.”

With hard eyes comparing the two stories, however, Holden in “Slight” is merely a spoiled young man. He is just on a Christmas vacation, not

all” (92). On the halfway through Central Park, (possibly almost reaching his home), Holden remembers what he decided to do in New York and asks the driver to turn around. And then, suddenly he asks the driver where the ducks in Central Park go when the lagoon is frozen over. The driver gets angry at the odd question and will not answer (92). But Holden tries the same question to another cab driver when he goes out to somewhere from a hotel to meet somebody to talk with (126).

Noma explains that Holden’s questions toward the drivers have specific and interclass factors: Holden is able to ask such an immature question only to cab drivers, because of the closed space of cabs and the drivers’ lower standing than his own (Noma, 56).

However, there can be another emotional factor. When the first cab passes around his home, Holden must be vividly aware that he cannot go home even when he wants to. Getting on the second cab is to escape from his loneliness, which he needs not have taken if he went home.

Holden’s homecoming occupies an important place in *Catcher* studies. Heizerman and Miller Jr. take *Catcher* into the form of American Adam, and define the story as Holden’s homecoming tale. And the image of the ducks strongly relates to this theme. But in *Catcher*, Holden cannot go home even though he wants. Holden’s image of ducks signifies his feeling of alienation from not only schools but also his home.

### **1.3. “Slight Rebellion off Madison”: Ducks as Desire to Escape**

We have confirmed that the image of the ducks shows Holden’s loneliness. In “I’m Crazy,” the factor is his dropouts from schools, and in *Catcher*, both dropouts and being out of his home. But the image of the ducks in *Catcher* is more than that. With influence of the other short story, “Slight Rebellion off Madison”, the image of the ducks contains another symbolic character of his desire to escape.

We have already seen the first scene of the image of the ducks, and many of you might have realized that Holden puts a question on the image. He starts thinking with the lagoon in Central Park:

suitcase, 2) In a conversation with two nuns, when one of them said “Pencey is a good school”, he replies in silence (In Noma’s opinion, silence means “yes”), 3) At the elementary school where Phoebe goes, Holden replies in silence again to the almost same question to the nun (Noma, 87). As long as Holden feels some pride and fondness to Pencey prep, it will make him lonely to be expelled out.

Apropos, there is a big difference between *Catcher* and “I’m Crazy.” Because of it, *Catcher* is more expanded and complicated. The difference comes from his situation; whether he can go home or not.

In “I’m Crazy,” when Mr. Spencer asks “Will you go home today?”(79), Holden answers “yes” as Mr. Thurmer admits. In *Catcher*, however, the situation is not the same. Holden answers to Mr. Spencer’s same question that the headmaster will write to his parents to tell their son’s dropout on next Monday and Holden is supposed to stay at the dormitory till Wednesday, when his parents will come up to school. Yet he decides to leave Pencey on the night soon after a fight with his roommate, Stradlater. Holden mentions the decision as follows;

So What I decided to do, I decided I’d take a room in a hotel in New York \_Some very inexpensive hotel and all \_and just take it easy till Wednesday. Then, on Wednesday, I’d go home all rested up and feeling swell . (79)

In *Catcher*, Holden packs off from Pencey where he is supposed to stay till Wednesday. He decides to go to New York, but not to his home; he starts a little roaming in his hometown. It is very different from “Crazy” where Holden goes straight to home.

Ostensibly, Holden’s roaming starts somehow optimistically, but in fact it makes him more forlorn and has an effect on his image of ducks; it happens in the second scene of the image of the ducks.

In *Catcher*, on arriving at New York, Holden gets a cab and he is so “absent-minded” to give “the driver my regular address, just out of habit and

the lagoon go when it has got frozen over. The image of the ducks reflects his loneliness. Even before seeing his father, Holden tells he knows he is never going back to school, and then he starts again wondering where the ducks go. He thinks the ducks as the mirror of his situation kicked out from school. In “Crazy”, the image of the ducks show his loneliness caused by the expulsion from the schools.

In *Catcher*, as similarly in “Crazy”, Holden is kicked out from his fourth school. He visits Mr. Spencer and gets an image of ducks while he talks to the teacher (Chapter.2). Following quotation is the first scene of the image of the ducks in *Catcher*.

The funny thing is, though, I was sort of thinking of something else while I shot the bull [to Mr. Spencer]. I live in New York, and I was thinking about the lagoon in Central Park, down near Central Park South. I was wondering if it would be frozen over when I got home, and if it was, where did the ducks go. I was wondering where the ducks went when the lagoon got all icy and frozen over. I wondered if some guy came in a truck and took them away to a zoo or something. Or if they just flew away. (22)

As previously mentioned, *Catcher*'s chapter 2 models itself on “Crazy.” The image of the ducks is also used to represent Holden's loneliness. And Holden's description in *Catcher* more focuses on the relation between the ducks and the frozen lagoon, erasing the image of his house's window to look down at the lagoon. Salinger uses the image of the ducks to show Holden's loneliness toward the expulsion, even more effectively to equate Holden and the ducks.

In the first half of *Catcher*, however, many times Holden mentions how much he hates schools where he went and how many phonies are there. It seems somehow unreasonable that Holden feels lonesome to leave the academic places. Noma insists that Holden is proud of Pencey Prep for which he gives three reasons: 1) Holden holds Pencey sticker sealed on his

think when they know his dropout. Phoebe's question, asking Holden about something he likes, is same as in *Catcher*. Most of all, the image of the ducks also appears just like in *Catcher*.

In the short story, Holden thinks about the ducks twice. The following quotation is the first scene of the image of the ducks in "Crazy".

"Do you blame me for flunking you, boy?" old Spencer asked me. "What would you have done in my place?" "The same thing," I said. "Down with the morons." But I wasn't giving it much thought at the minute. I was sort of wondering if the lagoon in Central Park would be frozen over when I got home, and if it was frozen over would everybody be ice skating when you looked out the window in the morning, and where did the ducks go, what happened to the ducks when the lagoon was frozen over. ("Crazy", 80)

Holden also thinks about ducks before he meets his father, in the last paragraph of "Crazy."

I knew that this time when Father said that I was going to work in that man's office that he means it, that I wasn't going back to school again ever, that I wouldn't like working in an office. I started wondering again where the ducks in Central Park went when the lagoon was frozen over, and finally I went to sleep. ("Crazy", 84)

Obviously, Holden thinks about the ducks of Central Park when he is concerned about himself out of schools. In Mr. Spenser's room, Holden is pointed out that he did not apply himself into the school and then is said "What would you have done in my place?" chilly. At the very moment, Holden must recall the basketball game, and associate it to the ducks in Central Park due to a similarity of the two: Holden was the only one who saw the game alone on a hill, and he images himself to look out the window at everybody ice-skating except him. And he wonders where the ducks of



he does not forget this image beyond his 17 years old birthday at least. He keeps holding the image of the ducks and wondering where and how they leave the frozen lagoon. Evidently, the image of the ducks is important to Holden.

## 1.2. “I’m Crazy”: Ducks as a Symbol of Loneliness

Before analyzing the image of the ducks in *Catcher*, let us take a look on two short stories making the novel’s foundation.

As many scholars have mentioned, evidently *Catcher* has its definitive models: Salinger’s two short stories, “I’m Crazy” (1945) and “Slight Rebellion off Madison” (1946). Wenke says, “In *Catcher*, Salinger combines and extends the incidents in “Slight Rebellion” and “I’m Crazy”” (Wenke, 25). Featuring a high school student Holden Caulfield, both “Crazy” in 1945, “Slight” in 1946 appeared on *New Yorker* magazine. According to Alexander, “Slight” was actually finished in 1941, but the editors of the magazine postponed the publication for Holden’s no-relationship to WW2; due to the current of the first half of 1940’s, people regarded young men should consider to go to the war (Alexander, 82). Salinger Association defines “Slight” as the model of *Catcher*’s chapter 17 and 18, “Crazy” as the prototype of chapter 1, 2, 21 and 22 (Catch the Catcher in the Rye, 85). Comparing the narrative styles of the three stories, however, “Slight” adapts third-person narrative, but on the other hand, both in *Catcher* and “Crazy”, Holden take the role of the narrator of his reminiscences. Even the both “Crazy” and “Slight” make the basement of *Catcher*, the importance of the former is a little bit higher.

In the two short stories, “I’m Crazy” contains the image of the ducks. In this paper, we will look into “Crazy” first.

The story starts with a contrast between Holden standing outside alone on a hill to all the high school students inside of the gym; they are down to a basketball game, and Holden is the only one who is not there. As like in *Catcher*, he just has been kicked out from his third (fourth in *Catcher*) high school, visits his old teacher Mr. Spenser, and considers how his parents

and 17 year-old Holden's comments on things to surround him. Particularly, the first half of the story is trimmed with his hate to schools and to phonies, with his one-sided lover, Jane Gallagher and his dead brother Allie. They are told, based on his experiences.

In the plot of the story, Holden thinks about the ducks in Central Park four times. Holden's image of the ducks is approximately as follows. When he arrived at home, if the lagoon in Central Park got all icy and frozen over, where would the ducks go? Whether they were carried away by someone with a truck or something to a zoo or the ducks just flew away. On these questions Holden's image of the ducks is embodied.

Holden's image of the ducks appears in the following four scenes:

- 1.) In Mr. Spencer's room where he visits to say goodbye to him before his leave by kicked-off from the school (C2.P22). There Holden is thinking about the ducks for the first time while he speaks with propriety to the teacher.
- 2.) In the first taxi he gets on (C9.P93). On arriving at New York, he takes a taxi and mistakenly tells his address of his house. While the taxi turns around toward a hotel, he asks the driver about the ducks.
- 3.) In the second taxi (C12.P129). He decides to go out to drink, and asks the cab driver about the ducks. But the cab driver Horwitz answers about the fishes in the frozen lagoon instead.
- 4.) The second day's midnight, after leaving a pub and before he goes home to meet Phoebe (C20.P235). He goes to see what the ducks are doing. Holden actually arrives at Central Park and find the lagoon partly frozen and partly not frozen, and there is none of the ducks around. Into the not frozen part of the lagoon, he throws most of remaining amount of money. Then he goes home.

The image of the ducks repeatedly appears for over two days out of the three days' roaming (and over 200 out of 326 pages in *Catcher*). Also

“Slight Rebellion off Madison”, and by some other episodes and incidents newly added in *Catcher*.

This thesis consists of three chapters. In Chapter 1, we will take a look at *Catcher* and the two short stories, “Crazy” and “Slight,” and their influences on the novel. I will mention that the image of the ducks shows Holden’s loneliness and desire to escape. In Chapter 2 and 3, I will discuss how the image of ducks relates to his real life during and after the roaming in New York. Finally, I will conclude whether or not both of Holden’s loneliness and desire to escape, which overlap with the image of the ducks, are solved at the end of the story.

## Chapter 1: *The Catcher in the Rye* and the Two Short Stories

### 1.1. Four Duck Scenes

Although J.D. Salinger writes many short stories and novellas, *The Catcher in the Rye* is his single novel. The simplest plot of *Catcher* is a pensee of the main character Holden’s three-day roaming in New York during a Christmas season.

*Catcher’s* plot summary is as follows: Holden Caulfield, who is 17 years old, narrates a story of his age 16. On the last Christmas season, he is dropped out from his fourth school, Pencey Prep, and is supposed to stay at the dormitory till Wednesday. He visits his history teacher, Mr. Spencer, and then at the night he gets a fight with his roommate and run away to New York where his house is. He wanders for three days experiencing the life of night clubs, trouble with a prostitute and her pimp, and separation from his girlfriend. In the midnight of the second day, he goes in his home to meet his little sister Phoebe. Asked of a question of his future dream, he answers that what he wants to be is the catcher in the rye. He leaves home to avoid his parents arriving back. On the noon of the last day, he decides to leave New York, but because of having seen and talked with Phoebe, Holden changes his mind to stay and go home.

The body text is expanded with some other episodes; Holden’s feeling,

# The Significance of the Ducks in *The Catcher in the Rye*

Shino Torikai

## Introduction

Jerome David Salinger's novel, *The Catcher in the Rye*, has achieved a great popularity especially among young people since it was first published in 1952. The main character Holden Caulfield's language, criticisms of the adult, anxiety, and distress have appealed to so many young people over generations for about 60 years. Additionally, Holden shows his own coherent philosophy in his narrative, and so many scholars have examined it. With the appearance of Salinger's more philosophical series of short stories and novellas, "The Glass Sage", Salinger Studies have become more and more popular, and his great popularity has given rise to a whole "Salinger Industry". And the vogue shows no sign of slowing down.

For many years, the mainstream of *Catcher* Studies have been analyzing Holden's dream of "the catcher in the rye" and his way of narrating, and not so many scholars have paid attention to the image of the ducks in the work. Even when they mention the image of the ducks, the purpose is just a quote to explain and strengthen the Holden-and-Innocence relationship; to put it shortly, the image is used as supportive evidence for a main theme.

But the image of the ducks is one of the most important symbols in *Catcher*. It can be an independent academic theme and has more meanings than the Holden-and-Innocence relation. In this paper, I will examine the image of the ducks in detail.

Salinger uses the image of the ducks to show Holden's sentiment even as early as in a model of *Catcher*, "I'm Crazy." And the meaning of the image of the ducks is expanded by the influence from the other model,